

ORIGINAL

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PRESIDING OFFICER'S  
RULING NO. MC98-1/4

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268

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Mailing Online Service

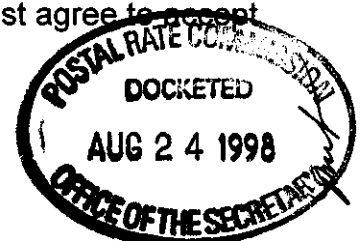
Docket No. MC98-1

PRESIDING OFFICER'S RULING SETTING EFFECTIVE START DATE OF POSTAL  
RATE COMMISSION'S ELECTRONIC SERVICE EXPERIMENT

(August 25, 1998)

During the August 14, 1998 prehearing conference for the Mailing Online Service classification case, MC98-1, the Commission proposed an electronic service experiment for all filed documents in that case. The electronic service experiment was identified as a cost savings option for intervenors through its reduction of the mailing requirements for hard copies of documents, with simplified service requirements benefiting both the intervenors and the Commission. All intervenors (including the Postal Service and the Office of Consumer Advocate) have the option to participate in this electronic service experiment, which shall become operational on September 15, 1998 and is expected to continue until completion of the MC98-1 case. The Commission will post electronic versions of all relevant filings in the case, including, but not limited to, motions, responses, testimony, interrogatories, notice of library references, rulings and briefs, so that these documents can be both read and downloaded. As participants in the experiment, intervenors agree to accept the electronic posting as effective service. A detailed overview of the electronic service experiment is provided as Attachment A to this ruling.

*Full Participation.* Interested intervenors may choose to participate either fully or in a more restricted capacity. As a full participant, the intervenor must agree to accept



the Commission Website postings of the Commission and other participating intervenors' documents as effective electronic service. When submitting documents, the intervenor files an original and three paper copies, as well as an electronic copy of the document in its original format and/or in pdf format (on a disk or by e-mail to [prc-dockets@prc.gov](mailto:prc-dockets@prc.gov)), with the Commission. The diskettes must be labeled with the following information: the docket number, party name, file name, type of printer and the version of software used. This constitutes service on the Commission,<sup>1</sup> and the Commission will effect service on all other participants, either by posting the document at [www.prc.gov](http://www.prc.gov) as service to all participating intervenors, or by serving all non-participating intervenors with a mailed hard copy of the document.

*Restricted Participation.* An intervenor choosing to forego the filing of electronic copies of documents may nonetheless participate in the electronic service experiment. In this instance, the participating intervenor files the requisite original and three paper copies of the document with the Commission, and also serves hard copies on all non-participating intervenors. The Commission subsequently generates the electronic copy, and posts that copy on the Commission's Website to provide full service to both the Commission and all participating intervenors. As with the full participating intervenor, the restricted participating intervenor agrees to accept electronic submissions as full service.

Those MC98-1 intervenors who decide not to participate in the electronic service experiment must follow the current rules for filing and service of documents, as provided by the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure 9-12.

All documents received for electronic filing on a given day should be posted by the Commission on its Website by the following morning. The Commission will continue its practice of posting a statement detailing all documents received each day (Daily Listing) on its Website. In addition, the Commission will 'e-mail' each participating

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<sup>1</sup> In all instances, the date and time of filing for intervenors are the date and time the Commission receives paper copies at its Docket Section.

intervenor (both full and restricted) notification when all filings received the previous day can be viewed, printed and downloaded.

Intervenors may join or leave the electronic service experiment at any time during the course of the proceedings. However, all those interested parties wishing to participate in the experiment from its start date of September 15, 1998 must complete the attached consent form (Attachment B to this ruling) for intervenor participation and return it to the Commission by September 11, 1998. A hard copy status update indicating the degree of participation of all MC98-1 intervenors will be provided by the Commission promptly thereafter. Specific questions about the operation of the experiment may be directed to the Commission's Administrative Office, at 202-789-6840.

#### RULING

1. Those intervenors interested in participating in the Commission's electronic service experiment should complete the attached consent form and return it to the Commission by September 11, 1998.

2. Upon receipt of the consent forms due on or before September 11, 1998, the Commission shall issue a status update on the degree of participation of all MC98-1 intervenors.

3. Questions about the electronic service experiment may be directed to the Commission's Administrative Office at 202-789-6840.

4. The electronic service experiment shall commence on September 15, 1998, and continue until completion of the MC98-1 case.



W.H. "Trey" LeBlanc III  
Presiding Officer

## ELECTRONIC SERVICE EXPERIMENT

Intervenor<sup>1</sup> agrees to participate and accept electronic service by reading/downloading documents from the PRC Website.

- Participating Intervenor file an original and three paper copies (a total of four) and an electronic copy (a disk containing the file in the original format and/or a PDF file<sup>2</sup>). This constitutes service on the PRC. The PRC will post the electronic version on its Website as soon as possible in the form of a PDF and the original word processing file zipped under Download. Where possible, a View file in HTML will also be made available on the Website. These Intervenor agree that:
  - \* the Commission's Website posting constitutes full service to all participating Intervenor
  - \* the Commission will serve all non-participating Intervenor by mailing hard copy
- An Intervenor who does not wish to file an electronic copy may still be a participating Intervenor by filing an original and three paper copies (a total of four) with the Commission and agreeing that:
  - \* electronic copies made by the Commission from the hard copy and posted to the Commission's Website constitutes full service to both the Commission and all participating Intervenor;
  - \* Intervenor will serve hard copies on all non-participating Intervenor.
- Intervenor who choose not to participate and not to accept service via the PRC Website must follow current rules and:
  - \* file an original and 24 paper copies (a total of 25) with the PRC;
  - \* serve hard copies on all other Intervenor.
  - \* if possible, file an electronic copy voluntarily to help out the experiment
- The date and time of filing for Intervenor is the date and time the Commission receives paper copies at its Docket Section.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this electronic service experiment, "Intervenor" includes the U.S. Postal Service and the Office of Consumer Advocate.

<sup>2</sup> A PDF file created from the original ensures that the electronic document matches the printed version. Adobe Acrobat 3.01 is available from resellers at a discount from its list price. GE Capital (1-800-999-8595) sells the NT, 95, and MAC versions for \$190.00. PRC personnel will be available for consultation on Acrobat's use. The Commission will also accept files e-mailed to prc-dockets@prc.gov instead of a disk.

**STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTRONIC SERVICE  
EXPERIMENT**

The undersigned agrees to participate in the Postal Rate Commission's electronic service experiment, which will be conducted from September 15, 1998 until completion of Docket No. MC98-1. As such, the undersigned will comply fully with the terms of the experiment while a participant, but is free to leave the experiment at any point upon provision of notification to the Commission.

Participation in the experiment will be on the following basis, as defined by P.O. Ruling MC98-1/^:

\_\_\_\_\_ Full Participation

\_\_\_\_\_ Restricted Participation

It is understood and agreed that signing this consent form for participation in the electronic service experiment binds all persons representing that intervenor.

Please return this form to the Postal Rate Commission by September 11, 1998.

Party	_____
Name of Representative	_____
Organization of Representative	_____
E-Mail address	_____
Normal electronic format	_____
Signature	_____
Date	_____